

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA : Case No: 21-CR-227 (JEB)
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: : 40 U.S.C. § 5104(e)(2)(G)
: : (Parading Demonstrating, or Picketing in
v. : a Capitol Building)
: :
ANDREW RYAN BENNETT, : :
: :
Defendant. : :
: :

STATEMENT OF OFFENSE

Pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11, the United States of America, by and through its attorney, the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, and the defendant, Andrew Ryan Bennett, with the concurrence of his attorney, agree and stipulate to the below factual basis for the defendant's guilty plea—that is, if this case were to proceed to trial, the parties stipulate that the United States could prove the below facts beyond a reasonable doubt:

The Attack at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021

1. The United States Capitol, which is located at First Street, SE, in Washington, D.C., is secured 24 hours a day by U.S. Capitol Police. Restrictions around the U.S. Capitol include permanent and temporary security barriers and posts manned by U.S. Capitol Police. Only authorized people with appropriate identification are allowed access inside the Capitol.
2. On January 6, 2021, the exterior plaza of the Capitol was closed to members of the public.

3. On January 6, 2021, a joint session of the United States Congress convened at the Capitol. During the joint session, elected members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate were meeting in separate chambers of the Capitol to certify the vote count of the Electoral College of the 2020 Presidential Election, which had taken place on November 3, 2020. The joint session began at approximately 1:00 p.m. Shortly thereafter, by approximately 1:30 p.m., the House and Senate adjourned to separate chambers to resolve a particular objection. Vice President Mike Pence was present and presiding, first in the joint session, and then in the Senate chamber.

4. As the proceedings continued in both the House and the Senate, and with Vice President Pence present and presiding over the Senate, a large crowd gathered outside the Capitol. As noted above, temporary and permanent barricades were in place around the exterior of the Capitol building, and U.S. Capitol Police were present and attempting to keep the crowd away from the Capitol and the proceedings underway inside.

5. At approximately 2:00 p.m., certain individuals in the crowd forced their way through, up, and over the barricades, and officers of the U.S. Capitol Police, and the crowd advanced to the exterior façade of the building. The crowd was not lawfully authorized to enter or remain in the building and, prior to entering the building, no members of the crowd submitted to security screenings or weapons checks by U.S. Capitol Police Officers or other authorized security officials.

6. At such time, the certification proceedings were still underway and the exterior doors and windows of the Capitol were locked or otherwise secured. Members of the U.S. Capitol Police attempted to maintain order and keep the crowd from entering the Capitol; however, shortly after 2:00 p.m., individuals in the crowd forced entry into the Capitol, including by breaking

windows and by assaulting members of law enforcement, as others in the crowd encouraged and assisted those acts. The riot resulted in substantial damage to the Capitol, requiring the expenditure of more than \$1.4 million dollars for repairs.

7. Shortly thereafter, at approximately 2:20 p.m., members of the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate, including the President of the Senate, Vice President Pence, were instructed to—and did—evacuate the chambers. Accordingly, all proceedings of the Congress, including the joint session, were effectively suspended until shortly after 8:00 p.m. the same day. In light of the dangerous circumstances caused by the unlawful entry to the Capitol, including the danger posed by individuals who had entered the Capitol without any security screening or weapons check, Congressional proceedings could not resume until after every unauthorized occupant had left the Capitol, and the building had been confirmed secured. The proceedings resumed at approximately 8:00 p.m. after the building had been secured. Vice President Pence remained in the Capitol from the time he was evacuated from the Senate Chamber until the session resumed.

Bennett's Participation in the January 6, 2021, Capitol Riot

8. According to evidence obtained from Facebook, on January 4, 2021, Bennett posted the following to his Facebook page: “You better be ready chaos is coming and I will be in DC on 1/6/2021 fighting for my freedom!”

9. On January 6, 2021, Bennett made his way to the Capitol grounds and began livestreaming video to his Facebook page from outside the building at approximately 1:00 p.m. Bennett eventually unlawfully entered the Capitol along with hundreds of other individuals. At approximately 2:17 p.m., 2:37 p.m., and 2:42 p.m., Bennett livestreamed three videos from inside the building to his Facebook page. During one point in one of those videos, Bennett admonished

others not to be destructive inside the Capitol. At multiple points, Bennett turned the camera on himself and captured himself inside the building, wearing a hat with the letters “FAFO,” an abbreviation of a slogan popular among the Proud Boys, a far-right group. There is no evidence Bennett was violent or destructive on the grounds of or inside the Capitol.

10. On January 11, 2021, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) obtained a search warrant for Bennett’s residence in Columbia, Maryland. During the execution of the warrant, the FBI recovered the hat bearing the “FAFO” slogan that Bennett wore inside the Capitol. Following the search, Bennett voluntarily interviewed with the FBI, and admitted that he unlawfully entered the Capitol on January 6, 2021. He also provided the unlock code of his cellphone to the FBI so FBI could search the device, and has been entirely cooperative with the government’s investigation since his arrest on January 26, 2021.

11. Upon further investigation, the FBI found that while Bennett attempted to contact a Maryland chapter of the Proud Boys about becoming a member, it did not find evidence that Bennett is a member of or associate of any organized chapter of the Proud Boys.

12. Bennett knew at the time he entered the Capitol that he did not have permission to enter the building and he paraded, demonstrated, or picketed inside the building.

Respectfully submitted,

CHANNING D. PHILLIPS
Acting United States Attorney
D.C. Bar No. 415793

By: /s/ Seth Adam Meinero
SETH ADAM MEINERO
Trial Attorney
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DEFENDANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, Andrew Ryan Bennett, have read this Statement of the Offense and have discussed it with my attorney. I fully understand this Statement of the Offense. I agree and acknowledge by my signature that this Statement of the Offense is true and accurate. I do this voluntarily and of my own free will. No threats have been made to me nor am I under the influence of anything that could impede my ability to understand this Statement of the Offense fully.

Date: 7/13/2021

Andrew R Bennett
Andrew Ryan Bennett
Defendant

ATTORNEY'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read this Statement of the Offense and have reviewed it with my client fully. I concur in my client's desire to adopt this Statement of the Offense as true and accurate.

Date: 7/13/21

Carlos Vanegas
Carlos Vanegas
Attorney for Defendant